THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The cost of the proposed Greenfield airport at Pekyong, Sikkim has been estimated at Rs. 340 crore. However, the funding pattern of the project has not yet been finalised.

(c) and (d) Rs. 25 Crores has been provided during 2006-07. The work on the construction of the airport will be started by Airports Authority of India once the pattern of funding has been firmed up.

Grant of licences to Pilots

2279. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation expects a shortage of 500 pilots every year against the availability of only 200 trained pilots;

(b) whether to overcome the pilot shortage, the DGCA has proposed to grant licence to about 250 foreign pilots early this year;

(c) whether as a measure to ease pilot shortage, DGCA is likely to introduce Multi-engine Pilot Licencing in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) With the present growth of aviation it is expected that shortage of around 500 pilots would be there every year. Presently, there are 3000 type rated pilots in India.

(b) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) does not suo moto grant or validate the Commercial Pilot Licences of foreign pilots. However, if airlines wish to deploy the foreign pilots/instructors, such applications are considered by DGCA for validation of their licences subject to fulfillment of the prescribed conditions. There are approximately 565 foreign pilots in the country working with various airlines.

(c) and (d) Multi engine pilot licenses are already in vogue in India.